

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW... EARLY WEDDING STORIES

By Judith A. Halstead

"Something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue." This was a rhyme created in Victorian England. Each item represents a good luck token for the bride, and if she carries them all, her marriage will be happy. But every wedding is different, some very elaborate and some very simple, as will be seen in this "Lodi Historian." Perhaps the one symbol common to most weddings is the wedding ring. Nearly every bride wears the unending circle that represents the love to come in the marriage.

The weddings in this story took place between 1875 and 1939. They took place in the Lodi area or were the special event of people who have lived in the area for many years.

Thank you to the people who shared their stories or contributed information and help. They are: Virginia Hurd Clark, Evelyn Cary Hassbaum, Gurlinda Kelly, Sally Laughman, Ynez Capell Lawson, Beulah Lewis, Vesta Pinkerton Mason, Suzanne McCann, Gladys Handel Mettler, Ann Hassbaum Peden, Merry Mitsue Koyama Sasaki, Maria Elena Serna, June Haru Koyama Shimozaki, and Douglas and Sharon Tunnell.

Mary Eliza Lewis and George Washington Hill March 14, 1875

She was just seventeen, but with her mother's written permission Mary Eliza Lewis married George Washington Hill, age 35, on March 14, 1875. George W. Hill had seen Mary Lewis in his jewelry shop and at the Methodist Church. She was said to have been the "handsomest girl in Lodi," evidently taking after her mother, who had been called San Joaquin County's best looking woman. George W. Hill could also provide well for Mary as he had already become an established business person.

At the time she was married, Mary knew very little about cooking and George taught her how to cook. While George was reserved and businesslike, Mary was extremely vivacious and socially inclined. She had many friends and was very active in community affairs.



George and Mary had two children, Nellie Etta Hill, born in 1883, and Maurice Schussler Hill, born in 1900. George W. Hill was the architect for his family's Queen Anne Victorian home built on School Street by the Cary brothers in 1901. This home was moved to Church Street in 1948 and is now the Hill House Museum maintained by the Lodi Historical Society.

George Washington Hill died in 1927, Mary Lewis Hill died in 1934, Nellie Hill died in 1929, and Maurice Hill died in 1984. There are no living descendants.



*Nell S. Hurd
and
Harry W. Bessac
August, 1909*

**Nell S. Hurd and Harry W. Bessac
August, 1909**

"Rosewild," the family country home east of Lodi, was the setting for the August 1909 wedding of Nell S. Hurd and Harry W. Bessac. The flowers Nell used for decoration were "Naked Ladies," lilies picked from the garden.

Nell and Harry had four children, three sons and one daughter, who is Virginia Clark, long time member of the Lodi Historical Society. She fondly remembers being well taken care of by her three older brothers.

Harry Bessac was an educator who was a principal of schools in Foresthill, Stockton, and the Lodi area. He was also a County Superintendent of Schools and one of the founders of what is now Humphreys College. Nell was at home with the children.

Virginia Clark lives in Lodi and attends and enjoys the Lodi Historical Society programs and events.

MILLION DOLLAR BABY

**Arvilla Bringham and Clarence Stonewall Jackson,
February 22, 1919**

Clarence Stonewall Jackson was working in Alameda for the Baldwin Company when he found his "Million Dollar Baby in the Baldwin Jewelry Store." She was Arvilla Bringham, who had come to San Francisco from Idaho for a job and adventure. She found the job with the Baldwin Jewelry Store in San Francisco.

When Clarence came across the bay on the ferry to the San Francisco company location, he met Arvilla. They fell in love and were married in a little white church in Santa Rosa on February 22, 1919. Their honeymoon was spent hiking Mount Tamalpais in Marin County, and they were nearly inseparable for the rest of their lives.

The rest of this family's story is a big part of Lodi's history. Clarence and Arvilla moved to Lodi in 1922 and raised their daughters Ynez and Yvonne. Clarence was an accountant for Ashley and Brown Fruit Packers and Shippers.

In 1934, after the repeal of Prohibition, it was Clarence Jackson who was inspired to plan a rebirth of the 1907

Tokay Carnival. This new Lodi Grape Festival celebrated and promoted the famous Tokay grapes, and it was a huge success. "This is just the start," Jackson told the Lodi News Sentinel, and it was. The Lodi Grape Festival is a tradition the community looks forward to each year. Clarence Jackson was Chief of Police in Lodi from 1934 until 1946. He also continued to work with the Grape Festival for many years.

On September 16, 1980, Clarence and Arvilla Jackson died within one hour of each other in their west Elm Street home. Arvilla, 83, died first of a heart seizure, and Clarence, 84, died moments later after he called the family doctor, Elmer Necker, to get help for his wife.

Their daughter, Ynez Jackson Capell Lawson lives in Lodi. She is a long time member of Lodi Historical Society. She also spoke at our monthly program in October 2008 about her family and growing up in Lodi.



Doris Mary Bradbury and Alfred Mason Tunnell November 23, 1923

The aftermath of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake brought the Bradbury family to California. Stonemasons were needed to help rebuild the city, so in 1908 Doris' father came from Baraboo, Wisconsin, then sent for his wife and seven children. They later settled in Turlock, then in Lodi and lived in the family home on Central Avenue. Alfred's father came from New York State to Eureka, and Alfred was later sent to Lodi to attend Lodi Academy. Doris Mary Bradbury and Alfred Mason Tunnell met while they were attending Lodi Academy.

On November 23, 1923, the couple was married at the Seventh Day Adventist Church with Pastor Clarence Santee officiating. Both Doris and Alfred were headed for the medical profession. Doris graduated from White Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in Los Angeles in 1929 and was the breadwinner until Alfred completed medical school at College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) in 1931. They had a daughter, Donna Jean, and a son, Douglas Raymond. Both still live in Lodi with their families.

Dr. Alfred Tunnell was well known and practiced in Palm Springs, Novato, and Lodi. He died at age 67. Doris was at home with the children until she returned to nursing at Mason Hospital in Lodi, then at the Fairmont Rehabilitation facility until her retirement. She died at age 83.

*Doris May Bradbury
and
Alfred Mason Tunnell
November 23, 1923*

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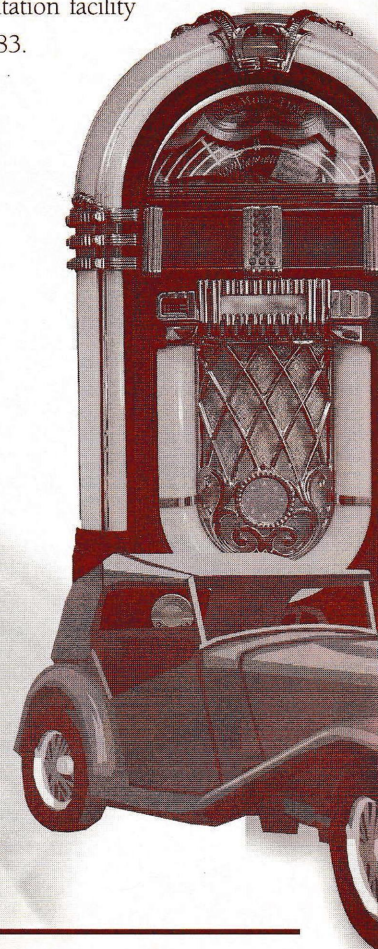
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Ethel Hatsuko Cho and Roy Kaneichi Koyama
December 14, 1929

Roy Kaneichi Koyama was a taxicab driver for Ethel Hatsuko Cho's father in Maui, Hawaii, and he had taken notice of his employer's daughter. But Roy wanted more opportunity so he came to California and worked in the grape vineyards in Acampo area. When he decided it was time to get married he returned to Maui, proposed to Ethel, and she followed him back to California. They were married on December 14, 1929.

Being a smart and hard worker, Roy was encouraged by his boss, Asa Van Vaulkenburgh, to buy property for planting grapes and strawberries. He also picked grapes, asparagus, and celery. With the seven children (five girls and two boys) Ethel worked the crops and learned to can food for the family.

World War II came, and the entire family was removed from their home on Kennefick Road. They spent some time being processed at the Stockton Fairgrounds before being sent to the

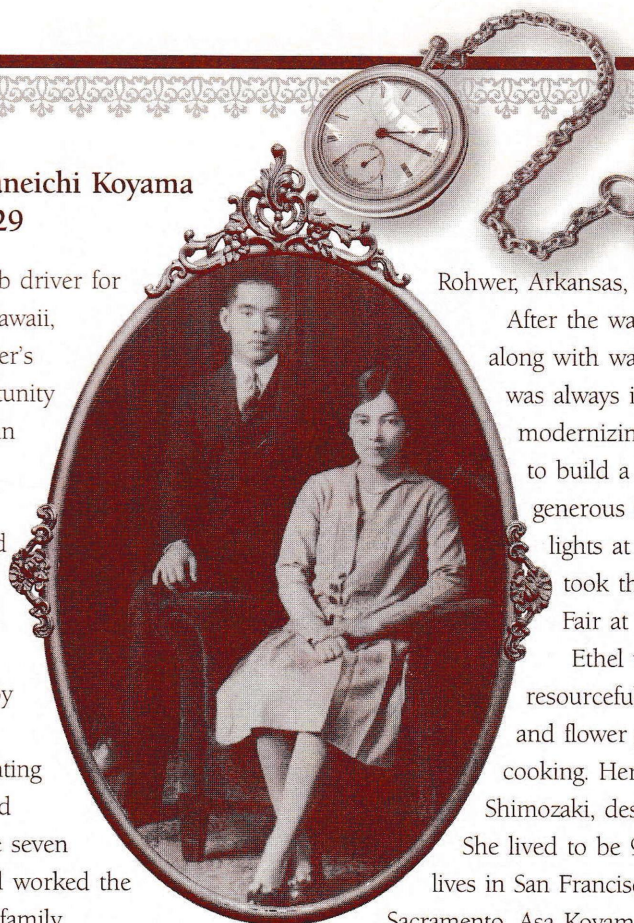
Rohwer, Arkansas, internment camp for four years.

After the war Roy Koyama put in new vineyards along with walnut trees. He enjoyed farming and was always interested in making work easier by modernizing equipment. He was one of the first to build a vine trimmer. He was a practical and generous man who loved having the tree and lights at Christmas. He also loved fairs and took the whole family to the 1939 World's Fair at Treasure Island. He lived to be 84.

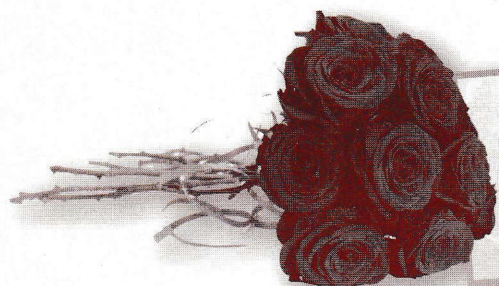
Ethel was known as a quiet, wise and resourceful person who loved her vegetable and flower garden and enjoyed needlework and cooking. Her daughters, Merry Sasaki and June Shimozaki, described her as a "classy" woman.

She lived to be 96. Of their seven children, Bernice lives in San Francisco, Amy and Jeanne live in

Sacramento, Asa Koyama is a retired farmer living in Acampo, June Shimozaki lives in Lodi, and Merry Sasaki lives in Acampo. Merry audits the books for Lodi Historical Society each year.



*Ethel Hatsuko Cho
and
Roy Kaneichi Koyama
December 14, 1929*



*Bertha Knoll
and
Jacob P. Kammerer
January 12, 1930*

Bertha Knoll and Jacob P. Kammerer
January 12, 1930

In the upstairs bedroom at the Hill House hangs a beautiful wedding dress worn by Bertha Knoll, of Victor, and Jacob P. Kammerer, of Franklin, when they were married on January 12, 1930, at the Mennonite Brethren Church on Hill-born and Flora Streets in Lodi. It snowed in Lodi that day!

Bertha Knoll was the eleventh of 15 children of Jacob Knoll. Jacob had sent his daughter at the age of 15 to what is now Humphreys College to study secretarial and office work. She was then able to do the extensive bookkeeping for her father's Victor Winery and his many acres of vineyards.

Bertha and Jacob Kammerer had a son and a daughter. They farmed grapes and almonds through the years, and they lived on north Alpine Road. Their son Maurice still lives in that family home. Their daughter Beulah donated the wedding dress to the Lodi Historical Society to be displayed. Jacob Kammerer died in 1979, and Bertha died in 2005, at age 97.



PEARLS & WHITE SATIN

Vesta H. Pinkerton and Herschel Mason
February 12, 1938

Extreme windy and rainy weather occurred in the week leading up to Saturday, February 12, 1938, the wedding day of Vesta H. Pinkerton and Herschel Mason. The weather did not improve on that day, and guests coming from Stockton could not use Lower Sacramento Road. They needed to come in from the east on Cherokee Lane.

But the bad weather did not dampen the beauty of the day for Vesta and Herschel. They had known each other from childhood when their mothers participated in neighborhood sewing circles, and now they were being married in the Methodist Church on Church Street. Vesta's dress was of white satin, princess style with a train and long sleeves. She wore pearls, and cyclamen and lilies of the valley made her bouquet. Beautiful traditional songs were "I Love You Truly" and "Because."

After a reception at the church Vesta and Herschel drove to Los Angeles and New Mexico for honeymooning. Herschel then farmed with his father, and Vesta was at

home with their two children, Carol Lynn and Douglas, who live in the Lodi area.

Vesta lives in Lodi and has been a pillar in our community through the years. She is a Life Member of Eastern Star, Lodi Women's Club, and Daughters of the American Revolution. She is a docent for the San Joaquin County Historical Museum and has been active with Lodi Historical Society and Lodi Antiques Club for many years. Vesta has also done extensive genealogy work on her family.



*Vesta H. Pinkerton
and
Herschel L. Mason, Jr.
February 12, 1938*

*Gladys Handel
and
Carl Mettler
June 19, 1938*



**Gladys Handel and Carl Mettler
June 19, 1938**

"You can't get married on Saturday, June 12," said her father. "You have to wait until the next Saturday, June 19, when the cherries will all be harvested." So, on June 19, 1938, in a 4:00 P.M. ceremony, Gladys Handel and Carl Mettler were married in the Salem Reformed Church with 250 guests and a sit down dinner reception at the Lodi Women's Club.

Gladys' and Carl's parents had been friends and neighbors, and the children both went to Alpine School and Lodi Union High School. Gladys was a Grape Festival princess in 1935, and Carl went on to San Francisco State Teachers College. Later he decided city life was not for him and returned to Lodi to farm cherries, alfalfa, beans, and grapes. He was also very active in many community projects.

After the wedding ceremony, Gladys and Carl drove up the two lane Redwood Highway and crossed into Canada for a honeymoon. Their return to Lodi was celebrated by family and friends with a "shivaree" in the big red barn, with kettles banging, horns playing, and lots of good food and drink.

Four children, three sons and one daughter, were born to the couple. Now, there are 27 grand children, great grandchildren, and great great grandchildren. "Not bad for an only child," quipped Gladys. Carl died in 1989. Gladys lives in Lodi and has been very active through the years in the Lodi Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, Lodi Historical Society and other organizations. Her delicious pies have always been enjoyed at picnics and dinners!



*Hedy Olvera
and
Jose Serna, Sr.
December 1938*

Hedy Olvera and Joseph Serna Sr. December 1938

Education is the driving force of the Serna family. Maria Elena Serna's grandmother, Santos Olvera, came north with five children, but left her two oldest in Mexico so they could stay in school. The family was granted legal entry into the United States and journeyed to southern California, where Santos Olvera had a poultry ranch and laundry in Brawley. To help keep the younger children in school she also sewed Rudolph Valentino's tuxedo shirts with tucks and mother of pearl buttons.

Evelyn Cary and Ernest "Bud" Hassbaum May 14, 1939

The old Lodi arch on Pine Street (built in 1907), the George Washington Hill home (now the Hill House Museum), Needham School, the old Emerson School, and approximately 40 other businesses and homes were built by the Cary brothers, twins Ed and Fred, from 1893 into the first half of the next century. Ed was the more artistic and intricate woodworker of the two. Ed Cary and Anna Van Valkenburgh were married on New Year's Day, 1904 near Acampo.

On May 14, 1939, Ed and Anna's daughter Evelyn married Ernest "Bud" Hassbaum at Trinity Episcopal Church in Portland, Oregon. Ed Cary gave his daughter's hand in marriage. Anna was then deceased. The bride wore a black dressmaker suit, white handmade blouse and white gloves and hat, with a corsage of white orchids and lilies of the valley. The couple honeymooned at Mt. Rainier.

After a period of time Evelyn and Bud returned to live in Lodi, where they raised their daughter Ann and son Cary. Bud was with Emery and Brown Appliances for many years. Evelyn Cary Hassbaum lives in Woodbridge and is the only Cary descendant currently in the area. She is a long standing member and supporter of the Lodi Historical Society, attending the picnics and ice cream socials, contributing her pineapple sauce for the ice cream sundaes.

All was lost in the Depression, and the family took to the road and became migrant farm workers. Maria Elena's mother, Hedy Olvera, started in the fields at age eight, and she attended 24 schools. In San Jose the family worked plums and apricots, and when their car gave out in Brentwood, they were advised to go to Lodi so they could get work year round. Hedy's family came to Bare Ranch on Woodbridge and Davis Roads.

Joseph Serna Sr. had been in Lodi working for Bare Ranch Fruit Company before Hedy's family arrived. They met in 1937; he was 20 years older than she. They fell in love and in December 1938 they eloped, leaving Bare Ranch to meet friends in Stockton. Hedy and Joe rode in the rumble seat of their friend's car to Oakland where they were married.

Though he had gone to only the sixth grade in school, Joe Serna came from a highly educated family. He was intellectual and very politically knowledgeable. He lived to be 76. Hedy knew that education was the only way for their four children, three sons and one daughter, to rise from poverty. She also said, "Do something for mankind," and each of them contributed greatly. Hedy Olvera lived to be 80 years old. Their daughter, Maria Elena Serna, lives in Lodi.



*Evelyn Clarice Cary
and
Ernest F. "Bud" Hassbaum
May 14, 1939*